VALIANT
JUN NO.1
25¢ CAN 30¢
VALIANT®
VOICE
DEATHMATE! The Image Crossover!
A Conversation with KEVIN VANHOOK
A VALIANT Coloring Challenge!
News, Interviews and MORE!
THIS MONTH
SOLAR #22-
"Afraid of the Darque"

VALIANT® VOICE™

VOLUME NUMBER ONE
ISSUE NUMBER ONE

DEATHMATE™

1993's premiere event is sure to be the history-making VALIANT/IMAGE crossover. DEATHMATE™, the title for the six-part series, brings together the industry's two hottest and fastest growing companies. "DEATHMATE is a logical extension of the commonalities between VALIANT and IMAGE. Both companies share many things; enthusiasm about the creative process, a genuine affection for the medium itself, and the use of innovative marketing techniques. A collaborative effort coming out of such a similar philosophy seemed only natural," said VALIANT publisher Steve Massarsky.

"DEATHMATE is a love story to end all time... literally," said Bob Layton, VALIANT's editor-in-chief. "The two universes will be brought together to form an alternate timeline much darker and more sinister than either of the originals." The catalyst is a chance encounter between VALIANT's Solar, Man of the Atom and Void, from Jim Lee's WildC.A.T.S. In the far future, Solar splits into two personae, and one of these leaves Earth to "find other planes of reality to explore" (a scene already played out in the pages of Rai #0). This split-persona Solar finds Void, and they fall in love... that's when the trouble begins. The strange nature of their joining begins to unravel the strands of time, creating the alternate amalgamated continuity where IMAGE and VALIANT characters exist side-by-side.

DEATHMATE begins in mid-June with the 32-page prologue that sets-up the storyline, bringing the two universes together. The prologue will be solicited by VALIANT with a $2.95 retail price and feature a foil-enhanced, card stock cover by Jim Lee and Bob Layton. In true collaborative spirit, both companies will contribute artistically to the prologue. Written by Bob Layton, the book features both VALIANT and IMAGE creators working together, and reads like a who's who of the comics industry.

Beginning July 1st, then approximately every two weeks thereafter through August, a new book in the series will be released. The four middle books will be 48-pages in length. Each book will feature both VALIANT and IMAGE characters, and be produced by different creative teams from the respective companies. Among the proposed teamups; H.A.R.D.C.A.T.S (select members of VALIANT's H.A.R.D. Corps and Jim Lee's WildC.A.T.S), Rob Liefeld's Youngblood with Bloodshot, Marc Silvestri's Cyberforce with X-O Manowar, Harbinger and Brigade, and Solar/Supreme. These books will be color-coded instead of numbered. DEATHMATE Black will be produced by Homage Studios, DEATHMATE Red will be produced by Extreme Studios, and both will be solicited by IMAGE. DEATHMATE Blue and Yellow will be produced and solicited by VALIANT. Each book will have a $4.95 retail price and feature a foil-enhanced, card stock cover.

September will see the 32-page DEATHMATE epilogue, which brings the story to its exciting conclusion. As with the prologue, creators from both companies will work together on the epilogue. The DEATHMATE epilogue will be in the same format and have the same retail price as the DEATHMATE prologue, and be solicited by IMAGE.

DEATHMATE will be the most heavily promoted direct market project ever. Both advertising and promotional support from such media sources as the Sci-Fi Channel are planned. Extensive trade advertising is planned, and various ancillary licenses including trading cards, t-shirts, etc. are currently being negotiated. At least four promotional posters, two from VALIANT and two from IMAGE, will be produced, and every retailer will receive one free premium issue of each book for every 50 copies of that issue they order. Taking a page from President Clinton's successful bid for the White House, three bus tours, each making stops at select comic shops along their respective routes, are currently in the works to coincide with a major convention this summer.

In short, 1993 is going to go down as the year of DEATHMATE.

SOLAR, MAN OF THE ATOM ©1993 Western Publishing Company, Inc. & Voyager Communications Inc. & ™ Western Publishing Company, Inc. BLOODSHOT, X-O MANOWAR, ARMSTRONG, SHAKESPEARE and all VALIANT® characters ™©1993 Voyager Communications Inc. VOID and all WildC.A.T.S characters ™©1993 Aegis Ent., Inc. RIPCLAW and all Cyberforce characters ™©1993 Marc Silvestri. PROPHET and all Youngblood characters ™© 1993 Rob Liefeld. BATTLESTONE and all Brigade characters ™© 1993 Rob Liefeld. DEATHMATE logo ™ Valiant and Image.

PUBLISHORIAL

A lot of thought, time, energy and planning went into the Valiant Voice. We wanted to create something much more than a description of upcoming product. The Valiant Voice had to be entertaining on its own. The concept was to enhance the Valiant Universe and add to the experience.

We have designed the Valiant Voice to give the reader insight into Valiant, its creators, plans and fans. The Valiant Voice will feature profiles of creators, inside info on upcoming projects, contests, art auctions, fan letters and profiles. We will also use the Valiant Voice to make special announcements like appearances, new licensed products and promotions. The Valiant Voice is for you, the reader, to help build our relationship. In the capable hands of Michelle Preli and Jim Perham, it will always evolve to serve our audience. We want the Valiant Voice to be interactive and we encourage your participation. Write to Michelle, Jim or any of us and let us know how we can make the Valiant Voice (or Valiant) better. We are having a great time creating the Valiant Universe and Voice for your enjoyment. We hope you enjoy it as much as we do.

Steven J. Massarsky
Publisher

Steve Massarsky & Bob Layton

EDITORIAL

Fanzines!

As much as I love being Editor-in-Chief and creating all these fantastic characters and concepts for VALIANT... my first passion in comics was for fanzines.

The small publications, put together by a handful of enthusiasts, for no other reason than their love of the art form, is something that will always hold a special appeal to me.

Fanzines and I go *wayyyyy* back... to the early seventies to be precise. It was in those days, with some assistance from fellow fans, John Byrne and Roger Stern, I edited and published a digest-sized fan mag called Contemporary Pictorial Literature (or C.P.L. for short).

It was a minor sensation (for its day) and served as a firm stepping stone to launch a kaboodle of careers (mine included).

Why did we do it? Because we all loved the comics medium. Fanzines. In a strange way, those early days may have been the beginnings of the VALIANT universe.

This publication is your turn to be a sensation since our fans will contribute to its monthly creation. This is your fanzine... for the intelligent, caring and sensitive VALIANT reader.

We won't encourage you to be zombies — we won't hype you to distraction — we won't give you a homogenized, sanitized trade paper.

What you're going to get is the kind of enthusiasm that we put into every VALIANT comic.

A VALIANT fanzine...

I suppose I've come full circle.

Bob Layton
Editor-in-Chief

VALIANT.

BOB LAYTON
Sr.V.P.,
Editor in Chief

STEVEN J.
MASSARSKY
Publisher, C.E.O.

BARRY
WINDSOR-
SMITH
Creative Consultant/
Senior Editor

JON
HARTZ
V.P.
Marketing
and
Sales

KEVIN
VANHOOK
Executive Editor

MARK
MORETTI
Editor

DON PERLIN
V.P. Special
Projects/
Creative Director

JENNIFER
MALDONADO
Editorial
Coordinator

FRED
PIERCE
V.P. Production

ED
DUPRE
V.P. Finance

CLIFF
VAN METER
Special Projects
Director

JADE
MOEDE
Art Department
Supervisor

MICHELLE PRELI
Manager of
Marketing
Special
Projects

JAMES
PERHAM
Sales
Publications
Director

BRIAN
BOERNER
Production
Manager

JOHN
KELLY
Asst. Production
Manager

RANDY BROZEN
Production
Coordinator

SCOTT
FRIEDLANDER
Design Director

SEYMOUR
MILES
V.P. Advertising
Sales

THERESA
GIARDINO
Accountant
Manager

MEAGHAN
TAYLOR
Direct Sales
Manager

VALIANT VOICE ™ Vol. 1 No. 1, March, 1993. Published by VALIANT®, a division of Voyager Communications Inc., Steven J. Massarsky, Secretary. Office of Publication: 275 Seventh Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10001 © 1993 Voyager Communications Inc. Magnus Robot Fighter, Solar, Man of the Atom, Turok, Son of Stone and all other characters herein and the distinctive likenesses thereof which originally appeared in publications originally published by Western Publishing, Inc. are trademarks of Western Publishing Company, Inc. used and all WinC A T S characters herein and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Aegis Ent., Inc. Ripclaw and all Cyberforce characters herein and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Marc Silvestri. Prophet and all Youngblood characters herein and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Rob Liefeld. Battlestone and all Brigade characters herein and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Rob Liefeld. All other characters herein and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Voyager Communications Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any persons living or dead, or any institution is unintended and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.

A CONVERSATION WITH
Kevin VanHook

Sitting in Voyager's conference room, which functions as much as a place for the Knobs to watch "The Green Hornet," as well as it does for staff meetings, Kevin VanHook recently took time out of his ten hour workday to talk about comics, writing and a brand new wardrobe. The writer of ***Solar, Man of the Atom***, ***The Eternal Warrior*** and ***Bloodshot***, Van Hook, at just 27, now finds himself as VALIANT's newly annointed Executive Editor. A self-effacing guy from Indiana who says "Ma'am" alot, Kevin often appears as a man who never stops working. Maybe it's the "mid-western work-ethic thing," but it's not unlikely to overhear Kevin acting out scenes, complete with appropriate sound effects and hand gestures. And his presence and imagination only adds to the already-energized office atmosphere here at VALIANT.

VV: How did you become interested in comic books?

KV: I started working in comics professionally when I was 17. I've been interested in them since I was 8. That's when I decided I wanted to draw comic books. And I drew for Pacific Comics back in the early 80's. A little bit of work for Marvel. Probably the bestselling thing I've ever done before coming to VALIANT was the Rocky Horror Picture Show — which I wrote and drew. And I also did a black and white adventure series for Caliber Press entitled "FROST: The Dying Breed."

VV: So, in this age of multiple degrees in specialized fields, you're largely self-taught; an autodidact?

KV: Yes, entirely self-taught, including my computer skills. When I want to learn something, I become obsessive.

VV: What are your major influences?

KV: As far as storytelling, Frank Miller has been a major influence on me. I admire his style and pacing. His writing goes back to people like Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammet. And Mike Grell, who wrote and drew Jon Sable in the early 80's, which I liked a lot. My writing is influenced more by prose writers like Lawrence Block, Stephen King and some of what Clive Barker was doing earlier on. And an author named Trevanian who wrote espionage, intrigue books. Those people have influenced my writing more than comic book people except for Frank Miller.

VV: That's interesting, since VALIANT concentrates on producing quality stories, as well as art, talk a little bit about how you approach the writing process.

KV: A definition of story has been passed down to me by writers here, and while I wasn't using this exact definition before, I stand by it: you must have conflict, climax, and resolution. So I play around with ideas, using Bob as a sounding board and we work from there. And then keeping these points in mind, I also have to think in terms of, okay, I've got to make sure the reader realizes that, for instance, this is Solar — in real life, Dr. Seleski, that he does have a workplace, he has commitments and obligations, he can't go off for a year on end and be unexplained. He has a relationship with Gayle. So all of those things run through my mind at the same time.

VV: An idea is such an intangible thing, where do they come from? Do they come from the real world?

KV: I read voraciously. I read the New York Post and occasionally pick up news headlines. I have a great deal of interest in artificial life and virtual reality and things like that. And that's shown up in my Solar - the science fiction material. I have an interest in the action-adventure espionage genre from the Frost series I wrote and drew in my pre-VALIANT days. So that pretty well gave me the groundwork to do the Eternal Warrior and Bloodshot.

VV: What about your habits as a writer?

KV: I do have some real weird working habits. Since I've been writing for VALIANT, I write alot and I also have a heavy workload in the office. Often, I find myself taking a nap between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m. in the morning, getting up and writing for two or three hours and then going back to bed. Or getting up at 6 a.m. and writing for three hours before I go to work.

VV: On the commuter train?

KV: I've done balloon placements on the train. I read scripts on the train as an editor. In that sense, it's a weird way to work. And I keep a journal.

VV: Do you write *as* the character or outside of the character?

KV: I definitely try to write as the character. And that's why I'm glad that all three of my books are first person narrative. Because it gives me a chance to do the voice.

VV: Do the characters have exchanges in your head?

Continued on page seven

VALIANT®
plus
PLANET STUDIOS
equals
OUT OF THIS WORLD MERCHANDISE

Amongst the many exciting announcements recently made by VALIANT, was the signing of a licensing agreement with Planet Studios for the production of VALIANT pins and jewelry. This agreement brings together two companies both noted in their respective industries. "VALIANT means quality, and we expect the same from our licensees. Planet Studios meets and exceeds these expectations," said VALIANT publisher, Steve Massarsky.

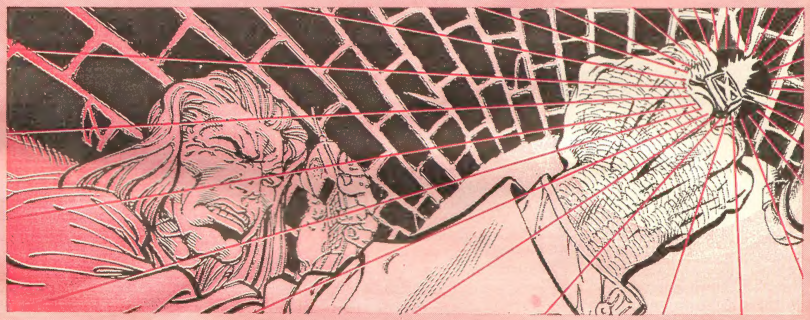
The first of Planet Studios' line of VALIANT merchandise will be solicited for release in May 1993, and the products will tie into VALIANT's X-O Manowar™ month promotion. Amongst these are:

X-O MANOWAR™ RING - Polished brass reproduction of the X-O Manowar™ class armor control ring. The ring will retail for $25.00, and be available in men's size 9 1/2. Made in the USA.

X-O MANOWAR™ FIGURE PIN - Cloisonne enamel lapel pin featuring a flying action cutout of the X-O character. The pin will retail for $6.95.

X-O MANOWAR™ ICON PIN - Cloisonne enamel lapel pin featuring the X-O icon, fast becoming one of the most recognizable symbols in comics. The pin will retail for $6.95.

Future products will be culled from across the entire line of VALIANT titles and characters. Keep an eye out for these in your distributor's catalog, and in future product updates in the VALIANT VOICE™.



ECHOES of the VOICE™

Please address all correspondence to:
VALIANT VOICE™ c/o VOYAGER COMMUNICATIONS INC. • 275 Seventh Ave. New York, New York 10001

Dear Valiant Crew,

Do you guys realize how hard it was to get the latest issue of X-O Manowar? My comic shop ran out the same day it came in. So I had to pay $4.00 for it a week later at a comic and card show. But it was worth it for two reasons: Bart Sears' artwork and the return of Turok Dinosaur Hunter. I have only picked up a few Valiant titles in the past like Solar and Magnus, but this new title will definitely join my vast collection.

Turok sure brings back a lot of memories from my childhood. He was the second Indian hero I knew besides Tonto from the Lone Ranger. The new updated version is better because he is now in the 20th century with a whole arsenal of futuristic weapons (I especially like the bow and arrow he had on the X-O cover.) I like this new version so much that I bought a few packs of Unity cards hoping I would get Turok.

Does your company realize that once issue #1 of Turok hits the stands, it will be the only comic to star a Native American Indian? And one whose name is not the stereotypical "Red Wolf," "Dawnstar," etc.? That is quite incredible seeing as how America has so many Indians. Future storylines could include Turok reading up on all the massacres throughout history on his people or he could possibly visit modern day Indians who live on reservations. The possibilities are endless and with talent like Truman, Michelinie, Sears, etc., the future looks bright. And I will be along for the ride.

Much success to a Valiant future!

Sincerely,
Nelson Jimenez
Stamford, CT

VV: We feel that Turok is a very special character as well, Nelson, and everyone at VALIANT is exciting about the possibilities such a series affords us. Check out April's VALIANT VOICE for an extra special Turok bonus!

• • •

Dear Valiant,

This is the very first time in my 38 years that I am writing to a comic book company! Congratulations on your fine comics. I have been buying all the Valiant titles for several months now and especially enjoy Shadowman, Rai, X-O... what the hell, I like all of them!

I am a fairly successful recording artist and my contribution to help make Valiant more well known is to thank you in the liner notes of my newest CD — "City Magic". I hope to sell about 50,000 copies. Enclosed are some of my older projects. If you feel like throwing a couple of gold or platinum Valiants in the mail to me, I wouldn't mind at all!

Thank you for helping bring about the "new age" of comics and best of luck in the future.

Sincerely,
Steve Bach
Branson, MO

VV: Cool tunes, Steve. Who knows... maybe we can convince Jack Boniface to lay down a few tracks on your next album?

• • •

Dear Valiant,

After reading Wizard #17, I must confess that I agree completely with what you said. I dislike the multiple covers and the large print runs. I agree with you about taking it slow and having controlled growth. I do appreciate the hard work that you guys do to make these quality comic books.

When I read Wizard #17, I said to myself, what would Valiant want me to do beside buying and reading their books. They would probably want me to share these principles with others. If everybody understood your ideas, then the world would be a much better place. After a lot of thought, I decided to write to my state's two senators — John McCain and Dennis DeConcini from Arizona. Probably, the leaders of our nation are the best ones to take these ideas to alot of people.

Thanks again for everybody's effort over there at Valiant.

Sincerely,
Ross Reeder
Gilbert, AZ

(Ross Reeder's letter to the Senators)
Dear Senator McCain,

The most important thing that we can do is to plan for the future. We have to insure that we (meaning this nation) will still be here in the future. Everybody, including politicians, should make quality and a true concern for others our priorities. Equally important is the ideal that slow, careful growth is best.

One organization that truly believes in this is, of all things, a comic book company. Valiant Comics, an independent comic book company, really cares about what they do. They aim to be here in the future. As should you. Politicians often claim to agree with these values, but I have observed that they normally do not carry through with their "promises." Please take my thoughts and Valiant Comics' thoughts into consideration.

Respectfully,
Ross Reede

VV: Dear Ross, what an interesting approach. Let us know how the Senators respond to your letter. Perhaps they can earn a Gold Logo book too.

• • •

Good Day, Eh!

Greetings from the frozen north! Funny, after going 36 years without ever having the urge to write a comic publisher, I find myself writing for the second time in two months.

First, Chapter 2 in my promote Valiant program. In order for me to reach a larger market, I contacted a retailer in the north end of Edmonton and I offered to purchase a copy of Harbinger #1 to make available for an in-store drawing. To my pleasant surprise, not only was the owner willing to build a display featuring the Valiant titles, but he also shared in the cost of the book. It is a compliment to Valiant that retailers, as well as fans, are impressed enough with your publications to go the extra effort to promote what I feel are the best graphic tales on the market today.

Second, a comment/observation/opinion. Having followed all of your titles from inception to the conclusion of Unity, I eagerly awaited the release of Rai #0. Seeing the effect of Unity on the timeline of Valiant continuity, following the lives and futures of my favorite heroes, and seeing the relationship between now and then seemed to be a wish granted. I guess there is some truth to the saying, "Be careful what you wish for, you just might get it."

Let me start by saying that I was in no way disappointed by the storyline. Sadness at the deaths of the heroes, pride at their courage, elation at the final victory. And the questions raised along the way all made for excellent entertainment. It's just that I was worried that the following stories would seem somehow anti-climactic.

Along comes Shadowman #9. Jack approaches life with a fatalistic view. He knows when he will die, so he feels he can do anything. Moving through life as an outsider, a walking deadman, his self-determination gone, he goes through the paces waiting to die. Do I really want to read this?

Then, hope! Jeremiah Dimanche observes that no man can know the time and manner of his death. Words spoken from ignorance or wisdom? Could it be that the events in Rai #0 are only probable consequences of Geoff's actions in releasing Bloodshot to his "Destiny?" Is this carefully mapped out future, the desire of Mother Earth, immutable or is it subject to the actions of highly improbable human (superhuman) beings? If so, what is the real role of the Geomancers? Are they caretakers or manipulators? Do they act from knowledge, ignorance or from misdirection from an earth spirit who has little reason to love mankind? How will the heroes accept being told they must die or, worse yet, being told they must stand aside and allow another to die? Will the Geomancers become the enemy given a slight change of circumstance? What is the final fate of mankind beyond 4000 A.D.? Can it or should it be changed?

The future: unknowable and fluid. There may be many paths to the same goal. "Time is not absolute!"

So you give me a road map and, being human and obtuse, I head into the bush. What can I say?

Unity, Rai #0 and all your titles breathe life into your universe by asking a question for every answer.. They grow and evolve and, like any truly good story, they take on a life of their own. Thank you and continued success!

Yours truly,
Scott Stanbury
Alberta Canada

VV: Scott — Rai #0 is a vision of the future, but, as you noted, "Time is not Absolute." The events spoken of by Geomancer Rokland Tate occurred a thousand years or more before his time, so some inaccuracies will occur. While exact circumstances may have been blurred by time, a kernel of truth will always exists - that is the nature of legends.

• • •

Dear Bob Layton,

I'm writing to you in order to discuss the development of a major new character in your universe. Frankly, Master Darque scares the crap out of me. Please don't take this lightly, in several years of collecting and reading countless comics, I have never once been frightened by a comic villain. After reading Eternal Warrior numbers 6 and 7, I recognized Master Darque as the only believable villain I have ever encountered. For once, here was a man who killed people not for fun, not because he thought it would make him look good, but because it was necessary in order for him to attain more power. The pursuit of power is exactly what has driven all the real-life monsters of history. Saddam Hussein didn't kill thousands of people for fun; he did it for power. Part of me wants to be angry with you for creating such a truly horrifying character; and, part of me wants to congratulate you on creating someone so realistic. While I am unable to locate a copy of his first appearance, I plan to follow this fascinating character and his nefarious exploits throughout the Valiant universe.

Sincerely,
Steve Pence
Costa Mesa, CA

VV: Master Darque is a sociopath, the most terrifying kind of villain imaginable - one who can exist within the norms of society in order to destroy it. His drive for power knows no limits, and it takes extraordinary individuals like Gilad and Shadowman to keep such a person in check. We feel Darque is important to the VALIANT universe because, as you noted, there are people who will to do anything to achieve total power. Hopefully, we can find the hero within us and prevent this from happening.

• • •

Dear Voyager/Valaint,

My name is Christobal Caderoni and I come from Italy. In my hometown of Albano, there are no comic books to be found. When I come to America to visit my cousin, he brings me to the comic store and I buy many comics to bring back to Italy. He is helping me type this letter since my English is poor. The last time I was in America, we bought many other comics. Now when I went to the store, we buy only Valiant comics. I asked him why I should buy Valiant and he said, "Chris, they are the best!" I didn't believe him at first, but after I realized how great they were, I went back right away. I saved 100,000 Lire for American comic books, and I spent it all on Valiant. Momma went crazy, but I didn't mind. I bought Magnus, X-O Manowar, Archer & Armstrong, Eternal Warrior, Shadowman, Bloodshot, H.A.R.D Corps, and many others that the shop had in the "back issue" section. I love comics and I will be sad to leave America in February. I will be saving my Lire for the next time I visit California. Maybe I will come to New York and visit you!

Sincerely,
Chris Calderoni
Irvine, CA

VV: There's nothing wrong with your English, Chris and enthusiasm is a language all its own. It makes us feel good to know that you've chosen us to carry back and share with your friends back home.

Not a bad batch of letters for our first time out. If you have any questions or comments about VALIANT comics or the VALIANT VOICE, please write.

VALIANT® COLORING CHALLENGE

Since **VALIANT**'s inception, we have continued to lead the industry with our hand-painted colors. Far from just filling in the blanks, our colorists are an integral part of the creative team. This is your chance to flesh out the cover of *MAGNUS*™ #25, rendered by legendary artist and Valiant Editor-In-Chief, Bob Layton. To participate, follow these simple steps:

1. Reduce the artwork on a photocopier by 65%. In doing this, you create a smaller easier version to color, just like we do in our studios.
2. Use the medium of your choice to color the photocopy (ie. colored pencils, markers, watercolors, crayons... etc.)
3. Please print your name, age, address, and phone number clearly on the back of the artwork.
4. Send your art (or a color photocopy) to:

VALIANT® COLORING CHALLENGE
c/o Voyager Communications Inc.
275 Seventh Ave. 14th Floor
N.Y., N.Y. 10001

All entries must be postmarked before midnight, April 30, 1993. Sorry, but no entries will be returned, so if you wish to keep your entry, send a color xerox instead. Bob Layton and Executive Editor Kevin VanHook will pick what they consider the three best entries. All winners will be sent a special prize and will have their artwork displayed in upcoming issues of the VALIANT VOICE!

1993 Western Publishing Company, Inc. / Voyager Communications Inc. and TM Western Publishing Company, Inc.

VALIANT®
GOLD LOGO HALL OF FAME

The response to our Gold Logo Program has been amazing, as well as creative. From board games to videos, we receive hundreds of Gold Logo submissions a week. A dental student sent us a tooth filled with a Gold X-O inscription. Another reader sent us a doctored Declaration of Independence signed by such VALIANT characters as Magnus and Shadowman. We've received VALIANT pumpkin carvings for Halloween, even photos showing Archer & Armstrong in lights on the movie marquee! Our intent was to design a program in which everyone could participate — something democratic. Readers, retailers, anyone can earn a Gold Logo book. Just do something extraordinary to support and promote VALIANT, send us proof, and we'll be glad to mail you a Gold Logo book. With the help of the Solar Squad and our interns Frank and Israel, we're able to respond to your submissions on a timely basis, with few exceptions. Keep them coming!

• • •

Les and Kim Mayhall's four month old son, Jory may be the youngest VALIANT® supporter around. Les made two of these special one-of-a-kind diapers, unfortunately, neither survived much beyond the time it took to take these pictures. Uh, we're pretty sure this was meant as a compliment.

• • •

In the category of "window displays", our first comes from Neal Johnson at Comic Town in Citrus Heights, California. Neal had a local artist paint this gigantic figure of his favorite character on the front windows of his store.

• • •

Mathew Smith, owner of Coyote Comics & Games in Santee, California, had his wife, Rita Terrell create a window display based on Archer & Armstrong #7. We think it looks great... and it looks like Matthew has one talented wife.

• • •

From another pair of talented fans, Robby and Helen Kauffman comes this embroidered quilt. Robby and Helen have certainly come up with a great way to keep warm for the winter.

• • •

Edward Venegas of Corpus Christi, Texas has an uncle who is a dentist. So with his uncle's help, Edward set out to test the old maxum about "word-of-mouth" being the best form of advertising.

• • •

Gail Nacios of Wayne, Pensylvania created her own VALIANT logo from red and white felt, then wore it as part of her tennis team warm-up outfit. Fortunately, Gail and her partner of five years, Pat McGoldrick won their match for the Springton Tennis Team that day. Today the hand-made logo hangs proudly at Comic Universal, in Frazer, Pensylvania.

• • •

Shawn Depreist went even further for his promotional idea. Shawn works at the local movie theatre in New Bern, North Carolina (the birthplace of Pepsi®) and took an opportunity to show us what Archer & Armstrong looks like in lights. Hey...has Speilberg seen this?

• • •

ARCHER & ARMSTRONG

JUST ASK VALIANT®

Ever wonder what Magnus' name would have been if Solar hadn't taken him into the future... or why Bloodshot's eyes only turn red, sometimes...or how X-O flies?

Every month you are going to have the opportunity to ask Valiant any question that comes to mind (that relates to the Valiant Universe). If you have a question, write it down and mail it to us at

JUST ASK VALIANT®
c/o Voyager
Communications Inc.
275 Seventh Ave.
New York, New York
10001

Since this is our first month, we're spotting you the first question. Although its one we've gotten frequently lately in letters and at conventions:

"Why do Rai (of Rai & the Future Force) and Bloodshot both have those red circles on their chests? Is there some connection between the two?"

Yes, there is a very definite connection between Rai and Bloodshot. Bloodshot's silicon-based, nanite powered blood flows through Takao Konishi's veins. It grants him some of Bloodshot's memories and all of Bloodshot's powers. More importantly, the whole line of Rai were created by Grandmother in the image of Bloodshot to honor his heroism. In that respect, you could almost think of the Rais as a direct line of descendants from Bloodshot. For more information check, out Rai #0 and Rai and the Future Force #9 (on sale now).

"A Conversation..." continued from page two

KV: Oh, yes. I pride myself on my dialogue. That's my biggest strength. I think dialogue is one of the most important things because it must ring true. You hear it everyday. If I don't act the scenes out physically, I at least act them out in my head. Once in a while it gets tricky — especially when you've got Gayle, who's a strong-willed woman, and Phil Seleski in the same room. And he's dealing with his own take on things. Whereas, she's just a normal human who's a little ticked off.

VV: And wants to be included.

KV: Right. She's not a Lois Lane character. And I don't want her to ever become that.

VV: What is it like to come aboard a project mid-way? How do you adopt it as your own, especially with tough deadlines?

KV: It's tough. I know my part of Eternal Warrior #3 was written in three days. Fortunately, I had a pretty good handle on that book since I had written the first two issues on spec to show to VALIANT to get work. They were rejected for various reasons and I had to rewrite them. But at least I'd been exposed to it before the first issue came out. The big thing with situations like that is, to try to do justice to what the original author wanted until such time that you can make it your own.

VV: Do you think the atmosphere is different here at Valiant as far as the creative process goes?

KV: It's different in a lot of ways. In terms of the creative process, there's a good structure here. And the Editor-in-Chief, Bob Layton, and I work well together. It's a good relationship. He's a very active sounding board. He's very free with ideas. He pitches things back. And he's not afraid to say, "No, that's stupid. The character would never do this."

VV: I've heard him say that.

KV: But at the same time, he's just as free with the praise. You know, "This is great" (slap on the back.). I've worked in other places where it was more or less turn it in, get paid for it, and go home. There wasn't much interaction. Here at Voyager, we're striving for the best stories and the tightest continuity that we can possibly produce. And we all work together.

VV: And you can work with your wife.

KV: It's nice to be able to work with my wife, Carol, who is a painter and colorist here as well. As it turns out, she ended up working with me as the colorist on Solar.

VV: So you guys bring that home.

KV: Yes, Solar lives in our house. Bloodshot, too. For Christmas, one of the fans sent in a GI Joe modified into Bloodshot. And I actually paid him to make two of them. So my twins have the first Bloodshot prototypes!

VV: In Solar, EW, and Bloodshot, many of the stories deal with the themes of memory, time and identity which are all elements of history really, or the opportunity to rewrite history.

KV: Right.

VV: Aside from the fact that you're the father of twins, are these themes of duality and second chances important to you?

KV: I think they're fascinating themes. How many of us would like to have the chance to be godlike? If given the chance, how many would do something over, want to make up for mistakes and so forth. And yet, at the same time, we're afraid that if given that chance, we'd screw it up again in a different way, somehow. Or worse, make the exact same mistakes over again. With Bloodshot, he is a man without memories. He's looking for the past that was stolen from him. It's an interesting thing. I hadn't really thought of the parallel between the books before. In the sense that Solar eradicated his past himself and basically started over at a certain point in his life. With Eternal Warrior, I have played up the fact that he can't forget. He has thousands of years of history behind him.

VV: "Always different, always the same."

KV: Right.

VV: Solar seems very complex in many ways. He often creates his own problems or, rather, his problems result from his own mistakes. Solar is certainly a tempted man.

KV: Yes, yes. With Solar, it is the ultimate chance to play up the fact that every action we take has reactions that ripple on out. And if you give someone godlike powers, it can have enormous ramifications. We've got a character, who, if he's ticked off with his girlfriend, can blow up a sun. He could literally wake up in a bad mood and destroy the world. He's got to keep that in containment. And yet his mind is perfectly human — his soul, his essence, is entirely human. It's in a highly energized, radiated form, but he's a human being with all the foibles and all the problems. And he was a pretty messed up guy to begin with. So he's not someone who had all of his stuff together like Aric (X-O), who, since he is a barbarian, doesn't have all of the hang-ups that most of us do.

VV: Then there is Bloodshot - a man living within the shadow of his own memory. You went out to San Diego to do a press check for VALIANT, wrote the first issue in your hotel room, and now it's this amazing success. Did you expect Bloodshot to be as big as it turned out to be?

KV: No, I didn't expect it. I'd hope it would be successful. I'm really pleased with how it's turned out.

VV: And here you are.

KV: Yes. Things are going well. I'm ecstatic. I've had really positive fan experiences. They're very polite. They ask questions. It's good because we have people who obviously read the books. It's really nice and refreshing to get the type of fan who comes up and says, "Like in Bloodshot #1 - this Malcolm guy, is he gonna come back?"

VV: Can you offer us any tidbits of gossip about what we can expect to happen next?

KV: Bloodshot will have found out about his past. That will be resolved this month. It's through the aid of the Eternal Warrior and what we have is a situation where Gilad is becoming a person who can no longer fulfill his role for Neville — an avenger or an armed agent, as a James Bond type character. Because he has to spend more and more time dealing with the problems of the earth and Master Darque and the Darque times. And, so he actually brings Bloodshot in to take that role.

The Immortal Enemy who appeared in Eternal Warrior #4. He'll battle Gilad again. And, ultimately, he will defeat Gilad in this encounter but in a really interesting way.

We're going to do some really pivotal things with Solar this year. The series is going to take an interesting direction. After he resolves his problems with Gayle, Solar will realize that he can't maintain this dichotomy any longer where he's constantly searching for the Spider Aliens; destroying them — that obsessive side. Plus, he's trying to maintain a normal life. And he does something he did in the future in Rai #0, which is split himself off into two. He sends himself off into space to search out and destroy the Spider Aliens while he maintains life here. But at a cost. He is powered down proportionately, so when he leads off into this summer's Secret Weapons #1, he's at a disadvantage. He's at half power.

VV: You have a new job title now. In addition to writing, you're now the Executive Editor. What does this title mean?

KV: Well, as Production Manager, I was responsible for making sure the books came out, were color separated, printed, etc. Now, I work directly with the artists and the writers. I'm editing Magnus and Rai and the Future Force, which are written by John Ostrander, so it's nice to have two books that are tied together written by one person.

VV: And the suits? Are you paying homage to Bob Layton with these suits?

KV: No, it was more like I got tired of being confused as one of the interns. So I decided to dress a little nicer and at least look as if I was on the management side.

VV: We didn't recognize you there for the first week!

KV: I know. I know.

VV: Not many people realize that you are an artist, as well. Do you have any plans to pursue that?

KV: Yes, I do. I'm going to be writing and drawing Eternal Warrior/Bloodshot #0. And Bob Layton will be inking. That's targeted for October — which gives me ten months. Let's see, I'll only have to do two pages a month, so hopefully ...

VV: On the commuter train?

KV: No, I can't draw on the train. I can do a lot on the train, but no drawing!

VALIANT®
TRAVELLING ART SHOW

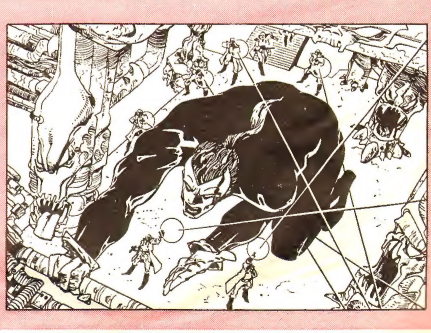
The Valiant Travelling Art Show continues its U.S. tour. Catch it at the following stores:

Feb. 25 - March 8
Mad Cat Comics
5041 W. Main Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
(616) 345-2344

March 9 - March 16
Scott's Baseball Cards and Comics
7428 S. Westnedge
Portage, MI 49002
(616) 329-1930

March 19 - March 28
Iguana's Comic Book Cafe
123 N. Linn, Suite 1A
Iowa City, IA 52245
(319) 338-0086

April 10 - April 20
Buy the Book
136 Cedar Tree Square
Belton, MO 64012
(816) 322-1208



~COMING THIS MONTH~

archer & ARMSTRONG #11

By Barry Windsor-Smith, John Floyd & Maurice Fontenot
$2.50/$3.15 Canadian

With special Guest-Star– Solar, Man of the Atom™

Archer & Armstrong wind down their tour of England with brother Ivar by making a stop at one of Armstrong's old hangouts–STONEHENGE. The true origin of the ancient site is revealed, but only serves to force A&A to make a less than dignified exit from town.

BLOODSHOT #5

By Kevin VanHook, Don Perlin, John Dixon and Jade
$2.25/$2.85 Canadian

Guest-Starring Rai™ and the Eternal Warrior™

Bloodshot's war with the mob forces him into an impossible situation. In the year 4002, Rai faces a similar dilemma and only "The Blood of Heroes" can save him from certain doom.

E·T·E·R·N·A·L WARRIOR #11

By Kevin VanHook, Mark Moretti, John Dixon and Paul Autio
$2.25/$2.85 Canadian

Gil faces the cruelest aspect of eternal life--his inability to save a terminally ill friend. The only solace he can provide is to fulfill one final request in "A Gift Before Dying."

HARBINGER #18

By Maurice Fontenot, Howard Simpson, Gonzalo Mayo and Maria Beccari
$2.50/$3.15 Canadian

The Harbinger kids find themselves caught in the middle of a feud between Harada and an ex-Eggbreaker named Screen. Can they stay out of the fight, or will they be forced to choose sides?

THE H.A.R.D. CORPS #7

By David Michelinie, Mike Leeke, Paul Autio and Dave Chlystek
$2.25/$2.85 Canadian

The team must rescue Shakespeare from the spider alien nest hidden in Oregon.

MAGNUS ROBOT FIGHTER #25

By John Ostrander, James Brock, Ralph Reese and Mark Csaszar
$2.95/$3.75 Canadian

Magnus dons a suit of battle armor to fight against the Malevs, but is it too little too late? To commemorate Magnus' 25th issue with VALIANT, this issue has a sculpted silver foil cover by Bob Layton.

RAI AND THE FUTURE FORCE #10

By John Ostrander, Sean Chen and Kathryn Bolinger
$2.25/$2.85 Canadian

Alone against the might of the Malev Emperor, Rai begins to question if he has what it takes to lead the resistance.

SHADOWMAN #14

By Bob Hall, John Dixon and Mike Cavallaro
$2.50/$3.15 Canadian

Attempting to put New Orleans, and Shadowman, behind him for a while, Jack buys a motorcycle and begins a three month tour of jazz clubs across the country. His first stop is in Georgia, where he learns that hatred comes in many different guises.

SOLAR MAN OF THE ATOM #22

By Kevin VanHook, Peter Grau, Stan Drake and Carol VanHook
$2.25/$2.85 Canadian

With Gayle gone, and his personal life foundering on the rocks, Phil finds himself thinking more and more like he did just prior to destroying his original universe. Little does he realize that he is but a pawn in the evil machinations of Master Darque.

X-O MANOWAR #17

By Jorge González, Jim Calafiore & Rodney Ramos
$2.25/$2.85 Canadian

When Orb Industries purchases a tract of land that holds certain "sentimental value" for mob boss Benito Carboni (it's where most of his former competitors are buried), his men try to dissuade the company from excavating the area. Once the shooting starts, the gangsters quickly learn they've started a fight that X-O Manowar will be more than happy to finish.

VALIANT.

COURTESY

Next Issue:

We talk to Maurice Fontenot, Howard Simpson, and Mark Moretti about HARBINGER. The VALIANT ART AUCTION begins. Part one of "THE 15 RAREST VALIANT COMICS", a SECRET WEAPONS preview poster and more!

See you in 30 days...